

ANSWERING ISKCON

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Why only Krishna is not Supreme Part 4

september 23, 2017 by publisher, posted in arguments against iskcon, bhagavat gita related arguments

Now in the last post I have taken the strongest claim and explained the Shankara Bhashya, which I had quoted. Now I will take the verse 7:23 of the Bhagavat Gita, show how Prabhupada explains it and then I will give it an alternate explanation, following is the verse

अन्तवत्तु फलं तेषां तद्भवत्यल्पमेधसाम् ।
देवान्देवयजो यान्ति मद्भक्ता यान्ति मामपि ॥ 23॥

antavat tu phalaṁ teṣhām tad bhavatyalpa-medhasām
devān deva-yajo yānti mad-bhaktā yānti mām api

anta-vat—perishable; **tu**—but; **phalam**—fruit; **teṣhām**—by them; **tat**—that; **bhavati**—
is; **alpa-medhasām**—people of small understanding; **devān**—to the celestial gods; **deva-
yajah**—the worshipers of the celestial gods; **yānti**—go; **mat**—my; **bhaktāḥ**—
devotees; **yānti**—go; **mām**—to me; **api**—whereas

Translation below

But the fruit gained by these people of small understanding is perishable. Those who worship the celestial gods go to the celestial abodes, while my devotees come to me.

Following is the entire commentary by Prabhupada

“Some commentators on the Gita say that one who worships a demigod can reach the Supreme Lord, but here it is clearly stated that the worshipers of demigods go to the different planetary systems where various demigods are situated, just as a worshiper of the sun achieves the sun or a worshiper of the demigod of the moon achieves the moon. Similarly, if anyone wants to worship a demigod like Indra, he can attain that particular god’s planet. It is not that everyone, regardless of whatever demigod is worshiped, will reach the Supreme Personality of Godhead. That is denied here, for it is clearly stated that the worshipers of demigods go to different planets in the material world, but the devotee of the Supreme Lord goes directly to the supreme planet of the Personality of Godhead.

Here the point may be raised that if the demigods are different parts of the body of the Supreme Lord, then the same end should be achieved by worshiping them. However, worshipers of the demigods are less intelligent because they don’t know to what part of the body food must be supplied. Some of them are so foolish that they claim that there are many parts and many ways to supply food. This isn’t very sanguine. Can anyone supply food to the body through the ears or eyes? They do not know that these demigods are different parts of the universal body of the Supreme Lord, and in their ignorance they believe that each and every demigod is a separate God and a competitor of the Supreme Lord.

Not only are demigods parts of the Supreme Lord, but ordinary living entities are also. In the Srimad-Bhagavatam it is stated that the brahmanas are the head of the Supreme Lord, the ksatriyas are the arms, etc., and that all serve different functions. Regardless of the situation, if one knows that both the demigods and himself are part and parcel of

the Supreme Lord, his knowledge is perfect. But if he does not understand this, he achieves different planets where the demigods reside. This is not the same destination the devotee reaches.

The results achieved by the demigods' benedictions are perishable because within this material world the planets, the demigods and their worshipers are all perishable. Therefore it is clearly stated in this verse that all results achieved by worshipping demigods are perishable, and therefore such worship is performed by the less intelligent living entity. Because the pure devotee engaged in Krsna consciousness in devotional service of the Supreme Lord achieves eternal blissful existence that is full of knowledge, his achievements and those of the common worshiper of the demigods are different. The Supreme Lord is unlimited; His favor is unlimited; His mercy is unlimited. Therefore the mercy of the Supreme Lord upon His pure devotees is unlimited."

In short, what Prabhupada strictly claims is that all the demigods although a part of Krishna, you don't reach Krishna by worshipping the Demigods, Krishna is like the stomach and when one feeds the stomach the whole body gets nourishment. So worshipping Krishna alone seems to be the primary duty of a person and that worshipping Durga, Shiva, Ganesh and other deities is equivalent to worshipping demigods. Hence worship of only Krishna gives you liberation. This is in essence his argument. I have already established the strongest claim of Iskcon to be a flawed one, hence establishing this minor claim would not be a problem. As I pointed out earlier when Krishna says "I" or "me" he is always referring himself as the Nirguna Brahman, we have already established that Krishna is the source of Saguna Brahman, we have discussed what Saguna Brahman or Ishwara is all about. Hence I don't need to keep repeating this again and again. Now in the Upanishads you have Karma Anga Upasana, Devata Upasana and Saguna Brahma Upasana. Karma Anga Upasana literally means that you do the Karma to attain results, better than this is Devata Upasana, in this the Upasaka or worshipper gets the loka or world of that Devata so for example some one worships Surya, he attains the loka of Surya and gets certain Vibhutis or powers as well. Then there is Saguna Brahma Upasana, where Brahman is approached with qualities, there is nothing in the Ten Upanishads which even remotely indicates that either Krishna or Vishnu are only Saguna Brahman. When such a person does Upasana of Saguna Brahman, he actually attains Hiranyagarbha loka, but even that is not considered Mukti. Since even over there he will need to do the listening of the Shastra. Now over here, Krishna is not even talking about Saguna Brahman Upasana. Let us 1st define who the Bhakta here is, we already defined Bhakti as something undividing or we can say connecting. So Bhakta here is he who is connecting with Krishna. Now only Nirguna Brahman is infinite, reason being that it is Non-dual, all pervasive, it has no loka and no form. Now in this case even Iskcon and all of its followers are merely doing Devata Upasana, so as per this verse they would definitely go to the Goloka they imagine it to be but they are still Devata Upasakas. The reason I say this is that, even the form of

Krishna is limited, no matter what people may argue from the Iskcon side, Krishna is obviously all the time doing some Rasa dance in Goloka, so you arrive in Goloka at a particular time post death if you follow the process recommended. Hence it is quite obvious that time does exist in Goloka. Hence the Alpa Medhasa or people of small understanding are the Iskconites themselves, not only them, the Vaishnavites and others are people of small understanding or intelligence. They have merely taken a limited frame and thought of that as the ultimate, this is the height of ridiculousness, hence Krishna is calling them people of small intelligence. When the Bhakta of Krishna or the person who connected to Krishna which is Nirguna Brahman in this case, he is connecting to the infinite and hence what ever he gets is infinite which cannot even be described or imagined. Alternatively let us assume that Krishna is referring himself as Ishwara, now we have already stated that Ishwara is actually formless but has the power to assume any form. So when one does Upasana of the Devata, if such a person has the understanding that beyond this form lies the ultimate reality but since I am unable to grasp the ultimate reality I have taken this form for convenience. Then worship of that form would cleanse his mind over time and finally that person would be fit to hear the Upanishads. If however the person thinks that only that form which he worships is the ultimate then such a person is a fool as per the Bhagavat Gita. So for example is some one worships Shiva but at the same time understands that ultimate reality is something different and inconceivable but just uses the form of Shiva to connect to the ultimate reality then such a type of worship is fine. In such a case we identify such a form with Ishwara, we accept that Ishwara actually has no form but for our convenience we use this form for worship then such a worship will eventually lead to liberation. Hence this verse is complete opposite of what Prabhupada actually proposes. So Krishna is merely taken as a form of Ishwara, same case with Shiva, Ganesh, Shakti and so on. So as long as the devotee connects the form of worship with Ishwara, meaning when he worships Ganesh he says Ganesh is Brahma, Vishnu, Shivatmakam. He is connecting the form of Ganesh with Ishwara who is actually formless. But he does not get into unnecessary talk of this Devata is great or that Devata is great, he does not say Shiva is greater than Vishnu or that Vishnu is greater than Shiva. In this case he is disconnecting both the forms with Ishwara. He becomes an Alpa Medhasa or a person of small intelligence. In this case, we should call the Iskcon followers Alpa Medhass only. This is the actually meaning of the verse, not what Prabhupada imagines it to be.

Why only Krishna is not Supreme Part 3

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